

Communication

by Devmountain Tutorials



WHAT'S COVERED

In this lesson, you will learn how to identify what is and is not effective communication. Specifically, this lesson will cover:



1. What is Communication?

Think of a time in your life when you've felt really understood by someone important to you or helped someone else—a friend, classmate, coworker, or family member—feel heard and understood. Did you feel closer or more connected to that person? Or experience a rush of satisfaction? Or maybe a deep sense of fulfillment?

If your answer is yes, there's a good chance you're already familiar with some of the rewards that come along with successful communication. Our ability as human beings to connect to others and send and receive information is not only crucial to feeling understood; it's also critical to our success at home, work, and school.

Luckily, **communication** is a skill you can practice and improve throughout your life.

Learning strong communication occurs by doing. You can hone your communication skill by participating in projects in your school, community, or job that involve collaborating with others to develop ideas, produce results, and accomplish common goals.



BIG IDEA

Here are some ways you can practice building your communication skill in your life right now:

- Read something that inspires you to think in new ways. Then, share what you learn with others online or in conversation.
- Practice explaining complicated ideas clearly and concisely. Twitter can help, as it forces you to keep your thoughts to 280 characters or fewer!
- Listen to podcasts or watch TED Talks and see how others communicate.
- Recognize that there are opportunities every day to practice communicating, whether it's with your friends, relatives, or people in your community. All these life situations can easily translate into stronger workplace communication habits. Try reflecting by asking yourself: What am I really trying to say? What am I hoping to achieve by communicating with this person or group? Considering these questions can help you communicate more effectively and clearly and less reactively.
- When faced with a question or problem, consider the best method to communicate your response. Would a face-to-face conversation be most effective? Does the situation call for a thumbs-up emoji or a formal memo? When it comes to getting your message right, how you communicate is also key.
- Use your self and social awareness skill to reflect on your past communication and ask yourself what went well and what you could do better: Was I clear when communicating? How did they react when I communicated my message? Did I choose the best form of communication? Was I actively listening to what someone was communicating to me?

Learning the skill of communication can help you listen and connect with others around you so you can improve your ability to build meaningful relationships, collaborate, and create powerful communities at home and school. And utilizing your communication skill is also essential to performing your best at work, whether you're in a meeting, giving a presentation to a large group, writing a proposal, or interviewing for a new job.



WATCH

This video gives a bird's eye view of how important communication is for improv theater as well as software engineering.



TERM TO KNOW

Communication

The ability to actively seek and deliver information, articulate ideas, effectively listen, and connect to various audiences, settings, and situations.

2. What Does Communication Look Like in the

Workplace?

Excellent communication has always been a part of success in the workplace. And, it's only becoming more valuable as technology changes the way we conduct business. As companies go virtual and remote workers become more commonplace, it's crucial that teams stay connected across long distances. Today's communication technology means we can contact our coworkers anytime and anywhere, but it also means that there are a number of ways for information to be lost in translation.

Of course, with online life available 24/7, it's also crucial to keep a healthy balance between your work and personal spaces. Understand that your coworkers are trying to maintain that balance as well. That requires using your communication skill too. Just because you can get ahold of your coworkers on the weekends via text or messenger doesn't mean you should!

➞ **EXAMPLE** At Poodle Jumper, we value communication with our employees because good communication improves team dynamics. When employees are good communicators, it creates an environment where all employees feel valued and understood. In fact, workplace communication can impact everything from job satisfaction to self-esteem. Communication in the workplace runs in both directions: from the top-down (from employer to employee) and also from the bottom-up (from employee to employer). Learning when to communicate formally versus informally, when to listen, and when to ask questions is important, whether you work in a traditional office environment or remotely.

Excellent communication can help you give and receive feedback at work, as in the case of a performance review. If you're on the giving end, you want to communicate your feedback clearly and respectfully. If you're on the receiving end, make sure you're actively listening to others (not just waiting for your turn to talk). Stay open to asking or answering clarifying questions to ensure everyone feels wholly understood.

As technology changes future jobs, they'll become more focused on creativity, people management, emotional intelligence, and negotiation. This means using communication to connect, building relationships, understanding others, and innovating together will become the new center of many people's careers. But, no matter what career you pursue, your communication skill will help you soar to new heights in your personal and professional life.

You may think that if you work as a software engineer, communication isn't as critical, but that's not the case. When hiring our software engineer we selected Monique because she demonstrated the ability to communicate complex ideas effectively. Being able to alter your communication to match the technical level of your audience isn't easy but it is critical to ensure a shared understanding—especially with service providers!

"Intelligence, knowledge, or experience are important and might get you a job, but strong communication skills are what will get you promoted."

Mireille Guiliano, Author



SUMMARY

This lesson explored the topic of **communication** by defining it as the ability to actively seek and deliver information, articulate ideas, effectively listen, and connect to various audiences, settings, and situations. Communication is crucial to feeling understood and to achieving success at home, work, and school. The lesson suggested several ways to practice and improve communication skills, such as

sharing what you learn with others, explaining complicated ideas clearly and concisely, and reflecting on past communication. The section also emphasized the importance of **communication in the workplace**, which impacts everything from job satisfaction to self-esteem, and can help give and receive feedback effectively. With technology changing the way we conduct business, it is crucial that teams stay connected across long distances, making excellent communication more valuable than ever.

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